

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A method of preparing a target slide for mass spectroscopy analysis comprising the steps of: making at least one pit (9a-9n) which is less than 1 mm wide and having a wall (13a-13n) and a pit bottom (15a-15n) in a sample receiving surface (5) of a substrate (3) of the target slide (1), wherein there is a rim (11a-11n) between said sample receiving surface and said wall (13a-13n); and, making said sample receiving surface (5) and the rim (11a-11n) of said at least one pit (9a-9n) more hydrophobic than the substrate (3) of said target slide.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1, wherein said rim (11a-11n) is coated with a layer of hydrophobic material (17).

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of making the pit bottom(s) (15a-15n) of said at least one pit (9a-9n) more hydrophobic than the substrate (3) of said target slide.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A target slide for use in a mass spectrometer comprising a substrate (3) having a hydrophobic sample receiving surface (5) including at least one pit (9a-9n) which is formed therein, said at least one pit being less than 1 mm wide and having a wall (13a-13n) and a pit bottom (15a-15n) in said sample receiving surface (5), wherein there is a rim (11a-11n) between said sample receiving surface and said wall (13a-13n), wherein said sample receiving surface (5) and the rim (11a-11n) of said at least one pit (9a-9n) are more hydrophobic than the substrate (3).

Claim 5 (previously presented): The target slide of claim 4, wherein said at least one pit is more than 0.05 mm wide.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The target slide of claim 4, wherein said at least one pit (9a-9n) is less than 100  $\mu\text{m}$  deep.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The target slide of claim 4, wherein said at least one pit (9a-9n) is more than 5  $\mu\text{m}$  deep.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The target slide of claim 4, comprising a substrate (3) of conducting material and wherein the sample receiving surface is coated with a layer (17) of hydrophobic material.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The target slide of claim 8, wherein said layer (17) of hydrophobic material is less than 0.1 mm thick.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The target slide of ~~claim 4-claim 8~~, wherein said pit bottom (15a-15n) is coated with a layer of hydrophobic material more hydrophobic than the substrate (3).